

# It's Elementary.

Anthony Element

## Now, about this Bridge I've got for Sale...

I had an interesting travel experience the other day. Shortly after we took off on an early flight from Gladstone to Brisbane, the guy sitting next to me tapped his newspaper and said, "Can you believe this garbage?"

I replied that until I'd had my morning coffee I'd pretty much believe anything.

I leaned over and had a look. The article that had him so aroused was about global warming. "Bloody scientists," he said, "They're all bullshitters."

"What," I asked, "all of them?"

"All this mob pushing this global warming stuff. They're all bullshit artists."

Now I'm a writer (look, that's my story and I'm sticking to it) so I'm always interested in other people's thought processes. What's more, I've heard this line of reasoning before and always found it confusing.



"Do you ever wonder," I asked him, "Why it's the scientists that can't be trusted and not, oh, I don't know, engineers, for example?"

"Can't trust any of them," he replied, his voice projecting complete certainty.

"You know," I said, picking my words carefully, "that's kind of an odd assertion to make, given that we're sitting in an aluminum tube cruising at about ten thousand metres and doing several hundred miles an hour."

He looked at me like I was stupid. "What's that got to do with anything?" he said. "It's pilots flying the plane."

I've thought a bit about that conversation since then. I wonder if he knows where milk comes from. It got me thinking about some of the other weird stuff that we humans can convince ourselves to believe. Turns out, there's no end to it.

I've since discovered that there really is a Flat Earth Society, (you can visit their forum [here](#)). These folks are convinced that the earth really is just the way it looks - and that's their main piece of evidence: It looks flat, ergo, it must be.

And not only that, but the bottom of the clouds look flat. So there!

Of course, space travel posed a brief problem, until the flat earthers realized that the whole thing was a giant cold war conspiracy in which the Americans and the Russians engaged in a giant make-up-a-story competition.

At the other end of the spectrum, so to speak, is the noble profession of Rumpology. Rumpologists, of whom Sylvester Stallone's mum is a leading expert, believe that you can tell a person's future by looking at the butt. Those of us with round rears tend to be happy, while flat bummers are "Vain, negative and sad."



Who knew?

But get this; people actually pay to have their rear ends read. So it must be true, no ifs or butts... sorry. I can't make up my mind if being a Rumpologist would be a really good job or a really terrible one.

And no wisecracks. Sorry... again.

But before you rush off in search of a large mirror...

I don't want to pick on our friends across the pond, but Americans do seem more than average likely to believe.... well, anything.

The US national pollster, [Public Policy Polling](#) has discovered that one in four Americans believe that aliens have visited earth, and one in five believes that a UFO crashed at Roswell. I can't find any data on how Aussies stack up, but I'd like to think...

And about the same proportion believe that these space folk shut themselves up in their wee flying saucers, hurled themselves across light years of empty space, all so they could make cute but confusing diagrams in Farmer Jones's fields by squashing his plants.

So what did Farmer Jones do to piss them off in the first place is what I want to know.



Of course, back in ancient times, people had all kinds of weird beliefs.

As long ago as 1999, a Gallup Poll, of, yes Americans again, turned up the fact that 18% of the US population believes that the sun revolves around the earth. It's a bit more of that, "well, it looks like it does," logic again.

And get this, 3% didn't have an opinion one way or the other.

Please remember that these are the folk with their finger on the big red button. Some of 'em anyway.

But lest we Aussies succumb to delusions of intellectual superiority, I have to reluctantly report that 27% of respondents to a survey conducted by Researchers from the Australian Academy of Science believed that dinosaurs roamed the earth at the same time as the earliest humans, which, oddly enough, is the same as the percentage of Texans who believe that.

Who knew that The Flintstones was actually a documentary?

And on top of that, an overwhelming number of Aussies think it's completely rational that our one dollar coin is twice the size of our two dollar coin.



Well, what else would it be?

Here is something of a personal confession. My sister, who lives in Canberra, earns a very good living making wands. Yes, the magical kind. She sells them on the internet, but the bulk of her business is done at local markets.



J. K Rowlings has a lot to answer for.

Of course it's a bit more understandable given that it's Canberra where entire budgets can be made to disappear in the blink of an eye. Fortunately though, there are a few things that are uniquely believed by Australians that turn out to be perfectly true.

For example, there is no social problem in existence that can't be fixed by providing better sporting facilities.

That anyone who can skull a yard can't be all bad.

Everybody, everywhere in the world likes Australians, and if they don't, well they can go and get knotted.

That of course excludes the Barmy Army because they hate everybody.

And I must confess that I've come to believe that yelling at my computer makes it go faster.

Hey, science isn't everything, you know.

Jim decided to tie the knot with his long time girlfriend. One evening, after the honeymoon, he was cleaning his golf shoes. His wife was standing there watching him. After a long period of silence she finally speaks. "Honey, I've been thinking, now that we are married I think it's time you quit golfing. Maybe you should sell your golf clubs." Jim gets this horrified look on his face. She says, "Darling, what's wrong?" He says "For a minute there you were sounding like my ex-wife." "Ex wife!" she screams, "I didn't know you were married before!" He says, "I wasn't!"

## RAAF Remembrance Ceremony.

The Sunshine Coast Sub-Branch of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAASC) held their annual Remembrance Ceremony on the 3<sup>rd</sup> November at the Queensland Air Museum in Caloundra. The Service marks the remembrance of all RAAF personnel who served in Units and Squadrons involved in the Vietnam War and other theatres of war as well as Peacekeeping and Peacemaking tasks.



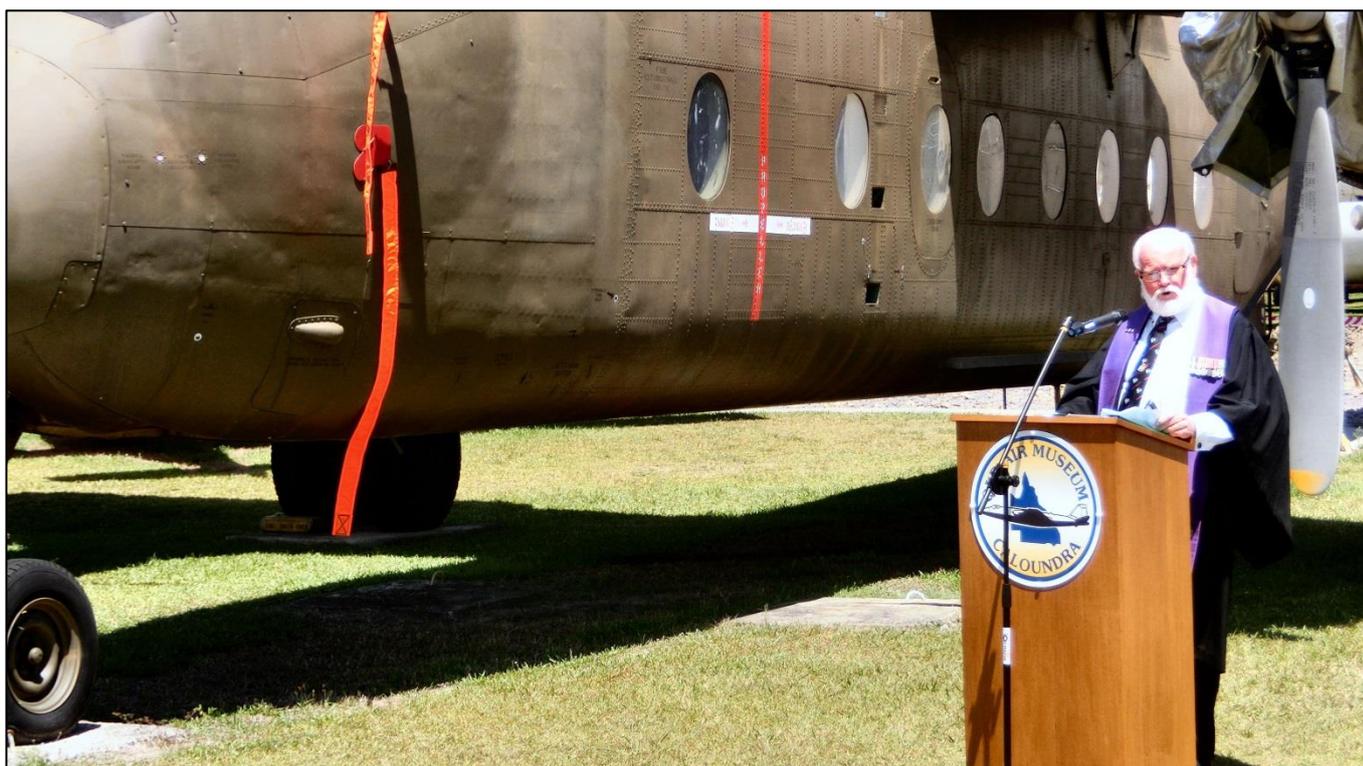
Mal Sayers, an old Depot Doggie from 2AD Radio, who is the secretary of the VVAASC, was the host and MC.

Padre Arthur Fry, also an old Radio man, lead the service in prayer. Arthur joined the RAAF in 1960 and arrived in Ballaarat (politically correct spelling) ready to start the next Rad Mech course (27 RMT) early in 1961. He says he remembers the days spent on parade outside of the Ballaarat Town Hall and observing the name at the top of that building. The spelling of the name was a source of constant confusion. It originated from two Aboriginal words "balla arat",

meaning "resting place". The municipality used the spelling Ballaarat as part of its corporate description, but the town itself came to be known as Ballarat.

Shortly after the course started, the Ballarat School was closed and in April 1961 everything was moved down to Laverton where Arthur finished the course. In late June of 1961 postings were announced and in July Arthur and a few mates were posted to Amberley. One of his mates, Tim Gear, was killed in an accident at Gladfield, just an hour short of his destination. Arthur was posted to 3 AD.

He didn't complete his Techs, instead he got into languages, studying at the RAAF School of Languages, then joined the Lutheran church and for the past 20 something years has been a Lutheran Minister. He held the position of Head of the Welfare Department (spanning Aged Care, Disability Services, Children's Homes and Women's Shelters) of the Lutheran Church in Queensland on a contract for two years. He was a Minister in the Congregational Church, serving as the Pastor at Brassall Congregational Church for several years then when he 'retired' he moved to the Sunshine Coast where there are no Congregational Churches. Retirement wasn't in his makeup so he threw his lot in with, and is now a Minister in the Churches of Christ in Queensland, operating out of the Caloundra Church of Christ at Dicky Beach.



Quite a number of people braved the hot sun to attend the event, the smart ones found shade under a wing or an awning.



After the ceremony, Mal invited everyone to the main hanger for morning tea and the opportunity to look over some of the museum's wonderful display of different civil and military aircraft.



Two aircraft of which the Museum is rightly proud to display are an ex 1Sqn F111 and an ex 35Sqn Caribou.

John "Sambo" Sambrooks, who is the Secretary of the RTFV/35Sqn Association has Caribous running through his veins and seeing the Caribou on the grass just couldn't control himself and had to take a couple of girls inside for a look.



L-R: Bree McEvoy (daughter of our Ted), Sambo, Maggie Anderson.



The F-111 on display, (A8-129). This aircraft we delivered to the RAAF in June 1973 and was flown by 1 Sqn at Amberley. It was retired in December 2010 and delivered to the Museum in May 2013.

The Queensland Air Museum is situated at the Caloundra Airport, about 100 kls north of Brisbane. Apart from Pt Cook, it is probably one of the better aircraft museums in Australia and if you haven't been, it is definitely worth a look.

Progress isn't made by early risers.  
It's made by lazy men trying to find easier ways to do something.

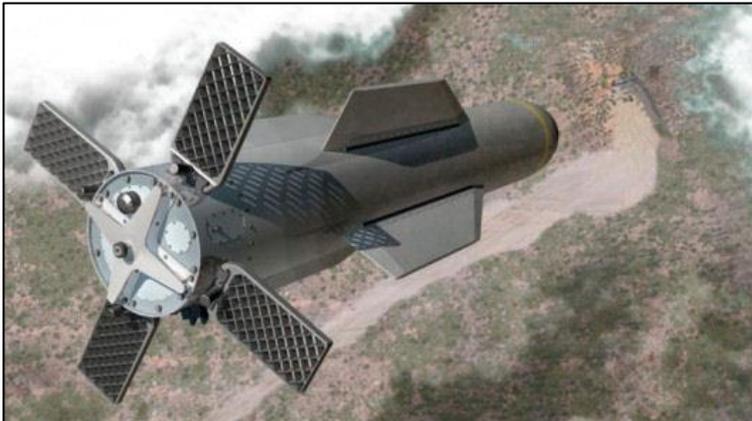
## There's just nowhere to hide anymore.

Military technology has created some fearsome weapons, such as:

The 5,000 lb	<a href="#">GBU-28 Deep-Throat bunker buster,</a>
The 15,000 lb	<a href="#">BLU-82 Daisycutter,</a>
The 15,650 lb	<a href="#">Russian ATBIP (Aviation Thermobaric Bomb of Increased Power).</a>
The 22,000 lb	<a href="#">Grand Slam earthquake bomb.</a>
and the 22,600 lb	<a href="#">GBU-43 MOAB (Massive Ordnance Air Blast),</a>

but if you were hiding under 50 meters of hardened concrete, none of them were going to bother you.

Well, until now!



The U.S. Air Force has just taken delivery of the first [GBU-57A/B \(Massive Ordnance Penetrator\)](#). It weighs 30,000 lb and will penetrate 200 ft of hardened concrete BEFORE it goes off. If you are reading this from an underground nuclear facility in Iran or North Korea, might we suggest some extended sick leave is (or soon will be) in order?

Perhaps the most surprising aspect of the Massive Ordnance Penetrator is that it is a relatively simple weapon.

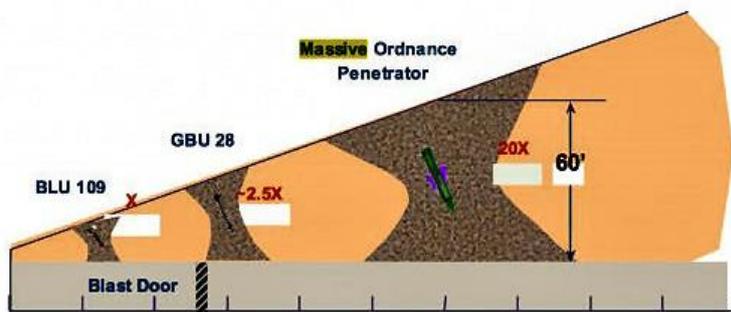
The GBU acronym at the front of the the official designation for the Massive Ordnance Penetrator (GBU-57A/B or MOP) can be found at the front of the name of almost everything the United States Air Force drops from a plane these days.

Not all that long ago, bombs were dropped in large numbers in the hope that at least some of them would hit their target.

These days, almost every bomb and missile is delivered with pinpoint accuracy. GBU stands for Guided Bomb Unit, and it means that the 20 foot GBU-57 A/B missile is zeroed in on the target by a GPS navigation system guiding its four lattice-type fins.

Not surprisingly, the bomb is intended for only one purpose - to destroy the type of hardened concrete bunkers which house central command facilities and weapons of mass destruction. It's hence not surprising that the program has been hurried into readiness with the growing concern that Iran has developed nuclear weaponry.

It is designed to penetrate supposedly untouchable facilities in one piece. The warhead case of the MOP is made from a special high performance steel alloy designed to maintain the integrity of the penetrator case during impact so that the payload can then do its job most effectively by exploding deep underground.



The MOP is deployed from high altitude and allows gravity to add momentum to its 30,000 pound weight so that it hits with enormous kinetic energy.

Put simply, the MOP hits exactly where it is intended to hit with enough energy to bury itself 200+ feet into

hardened concrete, then it explodes its 5,300 pound warhead.





The MOP is designed to be carried aboard B-2 and B-52 bombers so there's nowhere that is out of reach. The B-52 has a combat range of nearly 9000 miles, but aerial refueling means it effectively has an unlimited range.

During Operation Desert Strike on 2/3 September, 1996, two B-52s flew out of Barksdale Air Force Base in Louisiana and disrupted communications in Baghdad with AGM-86C cruise missiles. By the time the mission was over, 34 hours had expired. Hence it would be fair to say that the B-52 is only limited in its range by the endurance of the four-person air crew.



The most likely aircraft to deliver the MOP however, is the B-2 Spirit which like the B-52, can carry two MOPs - which means they will not likely see it coming.

The largely composite B-2 has vastly reduced infrared, acoustic, electro-magnetic, visual and radar signatures, extraordinary aerodynamic efficiency, a long range (6000 miles) without refueling and a

massive payload.

It is hence a potent delivery system for the likes of the MOP, as it is very difficult for defensive systems to detect, track and engage.

When a man says it's a silly, childish game,  
it's probably something his wife can beat him at.

## **AWA**

Kevin Poulter

In July of this year, AWA celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> year of operations in Australia –all thanks to Thomas Ernest “E.T.” Fisk.



Thomas Fisk, later known as Sir Ernest Fisk, began his business career in England selling newspapers, on a railway station in Middlesex. Fisk graduated in engineering in the works of Frederick Walton, then joined the British Post Office as a wireless telegraphist. Radio-telegraphy was introduced into England by Marconi in 1896. At that time it was accepted that spark transmitters broadcast over such a wide spectrum, only one radio channel was possible world-wide!

Marconi's work inspired Fisk to join the Marconi training school in 1906, learning Morse and wireless telegraphy, then qualifying as a radio engineer and operator. From 1909 he worked for American Marconi, demonstrating wireless to Newfoundland sealers and on the St Lawrence, before returning to Marconi's headquarters in London.

Wireless Communication was officially recognised by the Australian Commonwealth Government in the Wireless Telegraph Act of 1905. Initially wireless telegraphy was only used in warships on the Australian station.



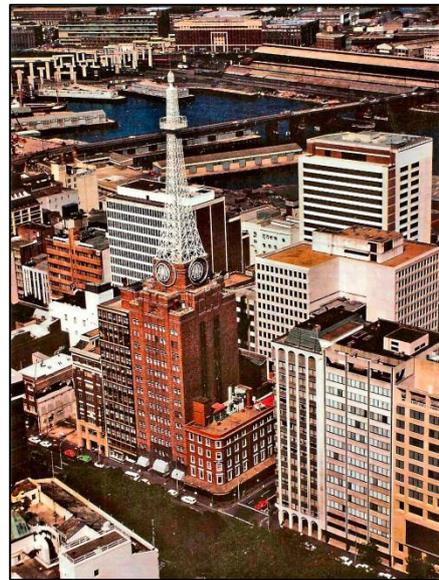
The growing potential for Australian wireless business attracted the Marconi Organisation's interest, so Fisk was despatched to Australia in 1910 to demonstrate Marconi apparatus. In that year radio telegraphy was realised and the first association of Wireless Experimenters in the British Empire was established in Sydney as "The Wireless Institute

of NSW". The founder George A. Taylor, was also developing wireless telegraphy, like communication from the front to the rear of a train and between trains running at full speed. The few transmissions at that time were mainly by amateur enthusiasts.

The Federal Government, acting on a report from Admiral Henderson, invited tenders for the construction of a wireless telegraph station in Sydney and another in Perth - each to have a daylight range of 1,250 miles. Fisk returned to Australia in 1911 to promote Marconi equipment. Unfortunately for the Marconi company, in 1911 a contract was signed with the lowest tenderers, Gesellschaft für drahtlose Telegraphie System (Telefunken) of Berlin for the construction and erection of these stations. Engineers and apparatus were shipped from Germany and the stations were erected, one at Pennant Hills near Sydney and the other at Applecross (above) near Fremantle, during 1912 and 1913.

When the Titanic sank in 1912, Shipping Lines began to consider that on board radio was an essential item, sparking renewed potential installations. During 1913 and 1914 a number of smaller stations were erected around the Australian coast at Melbourne, Hobart, Mt. Gambier, Port Adelaide, Esperance, Geraldton, Roebourne, Wyndham, Port Darwin, Thursday Island, Port Moresby, Townsville, Cooktown and Brisbane.

In 1913 a company was formed, Amalgamated Wireless (Australasia) Ltd; with Australian and English capital amounting to one hundred and forty thousand pounds. Fisk was a foundation Director, also General and Technical manager. AWA immediately purchased existing and future patent rights of the Marconi and Telefunken systems and in 1916 Fisk became AWA's Managing Director.



During WW1, AWA developed and manufactured apparatus for the Australasian mercantile marine, plus a large number of complete equipments for British vessels built in Japan and China for the British Ministry of Shipping. The interception of wireless messages from enemy ships at many points in the Pacific and eventually from European Stations in Germany, Italy, France and England, had useful and sometimes important results during the war. In 1917 wireless signals from Germany were intercepted at the Naval Wireless Station in Applecross, WA.

The Government took years to decide what to do with Wireless. From 1905 to 1915 the administration of the Wireless Telegraph Act was in the hands of the Federal Postmaster-General, then in 1915 it was transferred to the Minister for the Navy and in 1920 re-transferred to the Postmaster-General.

With the advent of broadcasting in 1923, a large number of Marconi School graduates entered the field of radio, occupying positions as technicians at broadcasting stations, radio sales and service mechanics. George Taylor played a leading role. On May 24, 1923, he chaired a conference of all parties interested in Wireless Broadcasting in Melbourne. A provisional scheme was adopted - the use of sealed sets, so listeners could only hear the one station the sets were tuned to. After a trial, this proved unsatisfactory, as people wanted a choice of radio stations.



The scheme finally adopted was designed to give full freedom in the establishment and conduct of broadcasting services, while avoiding the disabilities of American and English Broadcasting. This included concessions by the Government to persons or firms to establish and carry on Broadcasting Services on a competitive basis, licensing of private individuals to transmit for experimental purposes and allowing others to use wireless apparatus for receiving any services, plus the licensing of manufacturers and traders to deal in wireless apparatus for Broadcasting purposes.

In 1926 Fisk wrote: "Private Wireless Stations are now allowed under licence from the Postmaster-General, but all public wireless communication in and from Australia is controlled by a company in which the Federal Government appoints a majority of Directors and holds a majority of the shares.

It will arrange the provision of stations in the United Kingdom and Canada capable of maintaining direct communication with Australia. The rates will be, roughly speaking, 2/3 of those charged for cable messages. Existing Commonwealth Stations are taken over."

In 1927 a beam service between Australia and Britain was inaugurated, undercutting the cable countries. Then in 1928 the Australia - Canada service began, followed in 1930 by an Empire radio-telephone service. In 1931 the great radio pioneer, Marconi had become godfather to Fisk's fourth son, David Sarnoff Marconi.



Fisk was appointed Chairman of AWA in 1932, yet another major

achievement for a one-time newspaper seller. This was also the year AWA was the first company in Australia to introduce a bakelite - encased radio, the Radiolette C87 Cathedral (4 valve TRF) and GE 40 (AGE) version.

During WW2 AWA made transmitter receivers for the military and by 1944 AWA had a turnover exceeding four million pounds and 6000 employees, one of Australia's most powerful organisations.



During the 1920s to 1930s AWA made virtually everything in-house, including screws, resistors and foil capacitors, though these were sourced from IRC and Ducon after WW11.

Bakelite moulding was a speciality for knobs, cabinets, component parts, telephone handsets and parts for Sunbeam and Hotpoint appliances. AWA had some of the largest specialised injection moulding presses in Australia for precision moulding. Their machine-shop produced metalwork like chassis and component parts for tuners, switches, lighting, brackets, plus special screws and nuts for radio and instruments unique to AWA. In the final year before the Whitlam Government removed tariffs in the 70s, AWA manufactured approximately 975,000 loudspeakers.

AWA continued to grow their range in the 50s and beyond, with many new products like Two-Way Radio, Transistors, Integrated Circuits, Telephones and outer space technology. Sir Ernest Fisk had developed and guided AWA through a minefield of political and commercial challenges, to be one of the most successful Australian companies ever.

AWA experienced a period of turmoil in 1987 when they reported a \$49 million foreign exchange loss due to unauthorised trading in 1986/87. Over the next decade there were legal proceedings against auditors for failing to identify the trading, plus cross claims against the company's directors, the foreign exchange trader and the Banks involved.



In 1987, the company was renamed AWA Limited and in 1988 sold its telephone manufacturing and related businesses and closed its main manufacturing facility Radio Electric Works at Ashfield. AWA Computer Support Services was established as an independent business unit. In the early 90s unable to compete with lower cost imported products, AWA exited the field of domestic products and consumer electronics, to focus on industrial technology.

During the 90's AWA grew its export business to over \$90 million per annum by selling its infrastructure systems (Traffic, Air Navigation, Digital microwave radios for telecoms) to developing nations such as China, Indonesia, Philippines, Argentina, etc.

Today (2013) AWA employs close to 300 staff, and utilises the services of 700 agents in regional-rural Australia to complete 1,200 field calls, manage 22,000 inventory items

and move 40,000 parts a month Australia-wide to fulfil their obligation to many blue-chip companies and continues to service:

An excellent source of material is available in Rod Smith's book "The Best Years of Australian Radio".

One morning the doorbell rang. The weather was very bad. It was raining cats and dogs.

I opened the door and there stood a young girl - a Jehovah's Witness, soaking wet.

I felt sorry for her and asked her to come inside for a cup of coffee and to dry off a little.

As we sat and drank our coffee, I asked her what her 'happy message' was. I thought perhaps we might discuss some difference of belief, but she stuttered and said. .

. "Gee, I'm not sure, I've never got this far before ."

## A day out.

John Broughton, that pokie player of ill repute, was recently in Queensland and coaxed a couple of us to accompany him to Twin Towns on the Qld/NSW border for a couple of quieties and a bit of a flutter after which it was time for a meal. Unfortunately, we made a solid contribution to the Club's coffers.



L-R: Trev Benneworth, Ted Ilton and John Broughton.